



**PATENT APPLICATION OF  
EARL CULLY  
FOR A POND CYPRESS NAMED 'MORRIS'**



The new invention comprises a new and distinct cultivar of Pond Cypress, botanically known as *Taxodium ascendens*, referred to by the cultivar name 'Morris'. The initially discovered tree is growing in a  
5 cultivated area on the home grounds of inventor, Earl Cully, 846 Hoagland Road, Jacksonville, Illinois in Morgan County, in Township 14, Range 10.

The new cultivar, 'Morris' is the result of a small stick of scion wood given to the inventor by the late Joseph C. McDaniel in the mid 1960's. The scion was taken from a Pond Cypress at the Morris  
10 Arboretum with the permission of Dr. John Fogg, who was then director of the Arboretum. J. C. McDaniel gave the inventor this scion, which was grafted onto a young Bald Cypress seedling at the inventor's nursery. The graft took, and grew into tree, developing a medium oval crown. On seeing how well this tree developed, it was further propagated and  
15 evaluated by the inventor. After evaluating this Pond Cypress for nearly thirty-eight years, the inventor came to the firm conclusion that this tree was worthy of cultivar status. After evaluating seedling populations of *Taxodium ascendens* for the past forty years, the tree now known as the 'Morris' cultivar displays better form, hardiness, and foliage color than any  
20 Pond Cypress the inventor has observed, including the 'Prairie Sentinel', which the inventor introduced under patent No. 3,548 issued May 14,

1974. As the years passed, the original tree at the Morris Arboretum has deteriorated to the point to where it is no longer a viable tree; therefore, this patent application is prepared for the first cloned tree grown from the  
25 original tree at the Morris Arboretum.

The 'Morris' cultivar is medium oval in form with a straight, central leader, displaying fine thread-like leaves containing short thin scales or needles (Fig. 1). The male flowers are composed of a 3.0-10.0cm panicle of purple cones in late April (Fig. 2). The female ovules tend to cluster on tips  
30 of the proceeding year's growth. If fertilized, they develop into a subglobulose cone approximately 2.2cm in diameter that turns from green to brown-gray at maturity (Fig. 3). In autumn, the foliage changes from green to a copper-bronze (RHS colour chart; 165 B and C) (Fig. 4). A fibrous bark with irregularly, furrowed ridges covers the trunk (Fig.5). The cultivar has  
35 never suffered damage from high wind or ice in the thirty plus years that it has been under evaluation. The 'Morris' cultivar is very hardy. It has withstood minus twenty-eight degrees Fahrenheit at the U.S.D.A. zone 5b in which it is growing.

The following characteristics distinguish the new cultivar named  
40 'Morris' from other named cultivars of *Taxodium ascendens*. To the knowledge of this inventor, there is only one other introduced cultivar of

Pond Cypress, the 'Prairie Sentinel', which Earl Cully introduced in 1974. The 'Morris' cultivar is medium oval in form, but the 'Prairie Sentinel' is narrow pyramidal in form with a limb spread of only ten feet. *T. ascendens*

45 'Morris' has a limb spread of twenty-three feet. The 'Morris' cultivar is much hardier than the 'Prairie Sentinel'. The 'Prairie Sentinel' Pond Cypress has sustained winter damaged as well as mortality on several occasions at plantings in the northern portion of the U.S.D.A. zone 5b. The 'Morris' has never exhibited any damage from winter cold from U.S.D.A.

50 zone 5b plantings. This new cultivar grows more rapidly and has darker, green foliage than the 'Prairie Sentinel'.

## PROPAGATION

55 Asexual propagation is done by bud grafting (chip budding) onto one-year old *Taxodium distichum* seedlings. This method of propagation has given a 95% to 98% bud stand. Propagation is being performed on the property of the inventor and two wholesale nurseries, one in Oregon and the

60 other in Oklahoma. Asexual propagation by this method has proven to be very consistent and effective. Asexual reproduction by grafting has shown that the unique features of the new Pond Cypress 'Morris' are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations (Fig. 6).

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## DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

70 In the following description, all color references are made to the  
Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

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The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the appearance and color of the new Pond Cypress tree, showing the colors as accurately as can possibly be obtained in colored reproductions of this type. Actual foliage colors may differ slightly due to light reflectance.

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Fig. 1 depicts the initially discovered tree named 'Morris' in summer foliage.

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Fig. 2 depicts the awl like foliage and the male catkins as they appear in spring.

Fig. 3 depicts the round seed cone as it appears in the autumn.

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Fig. 4 depicts the tree in autumn color.

Fig. 5 depicts the tree in very early spring before foliage emerges.

Fig. 6 depicts the form of the asexually propagated 'Morris' cultivar.

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## THE PLANT

FORM: Tree

SHAPE: Excurrent, pyramidal

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HEIGHT: 13.1m (40ft)

SPREAD: 7.5m (23ft)

110 BARK: Trunk base flared; reddish brown (197A, 197B, and 197C, with a slight tinge of 174A); long longitudinal fibrous or scaly ridges deeply and irregularly furrowed, slightly peeling.

### BRANCHES:

115 Angle of attachment: Ranges from 30° to 45°

Spacing: Regular

Color: Branch color changes with size

Size: >1 cm (0.5 in) diameter (new growth)

Bark: Hairless, tan (197B and 197C)

120 Size: <1 cm (0.5 in) diameter

Bark: Hairless, gray (199B, 197B, and 197C)

Branch length: 2.4-3.0 m (8-10ft)

Branch diameter: 2.54-20.3 cm (1-8 in)

125 Leaves:

Scale Length: 0.4-0.9 cm,  $\mu$  = 0.7 cm

Scale Width: 0.1 cm,  $\mu$  = 0.1 cm

Leaf Length: 2.3-12.0 cm,  $\mu$  = 8.9 cm

Leaf Width: 0.1 cm

130 Form: long, slender, flexible with numerous, narrowly lanceolate (subulate) scales that are appressed.

Buds: (vegetative) tiny, <1 mm, slightly sunken (175A and 175B).

135 Flowers: male: terminal. Droop in branched spikose panicle 3.0-10.0 cm ( $\mu$  = 6.8 cm) long.

female: clustered mostly terminal ovulate cones green (137A and 137B).

140 Fruit: sessile or nearly sessile, subglobose 1.6-2.5 cm ( $\mu = 2.2$  cm) diameter,  
grooved with fan-shaped and rhomboid scales; green (137A) ripening to  
brown (165B and 165C).

145 HAS THIS PLANT ever been offered for sale? Yes. It was offered for  
spring 2003 delivery by a wholesale nursery in Oregon.

The 'Morris' cultivar is much hardier than the species. It appears to be a  
more vigorous grower. It has demonstrated from thirty plus years of

150 evaluation and testing a greater resistance to breakage from wind and ice.

In the opinion of the inventor, fall color is superior to the species.

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